

# SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
2559 NE 96th, Seattle, Washington, 98115

January 1985

Number 208



THINK SURVIVORS BANQUET

## IN MEMORIAM MILTON L. GROUT

Word just reached us that Milton L. Grout, past president of PSMS died December 31, 1984 at home surrounded by his family. At his request there was no funeral and no memorial service. Our deepest sympathy goes to Louise and the children. Remembrances are suggested to the Daniel E. Stuntz Memorial Fund, 2559 NE 96th, Seattle, 98115 or Northwest Oncology Foundation, 901 Boren, Seattle 98104 (More in February Spore Prints).

## MYCO NEWS

If you want additional information about the Daniel E. Stuntz Memorial Foundation you may call Carl Hermanson at 644-7433 or John Kunz at 362-7402.

Past Secretary (in the early seventies) Helen Hewitt died recently. Helen was a trained parliamentarian and kept the Board meetings in a very formal mode. She had not been active in the Society in recent years.

Dr. Alexander Smith recently celebrated his 80th birthday. The mycological community "swamped" him with greetings. Before retirement, he taught at the University of Michigan. He is the author of many scholarly articles on fungi and several field guides. He has stayed active during his retirement, and most recently participated in the Oregon Mycological Society's October foray.

During the Fall mushroom season Monte and Hildegard Hendrickson gave presentations at the Clyde Hill School and the Epiphany School.

## FINAL REMINDER TO PAY DUES FOR 1985

If you have not done so, please send your 1985 dues (\$12.00 for a family membership; \$8.50 for a single membership; and \$6.00 for a student membership) to 2559 NE 96th, Seattle, WA 98115, and you will remain a member in good standing. Note, that new members who have joined PSMS since September '84 have their membership paid through December '85.

Our membership chairman, Aino Kunz, has decals (2 kinds), pins, and patches - all displaying the Society's logo - for sale at the membership meetings. The red nametags can be ordered too.

The PSMS fiscal year coincides with the calendar year, and if you have not sent in your check by the end of January, this issue of Spore Prints which you are reading now, will be the last one you will receive. Pay up and don't be sorry!

## WILD MUSHROOM STUDY TOUR OF JAPAN OCT. 1984

Amelia Schultz

The Japan Tourist Bureau International who made the arrangements and supplied a superb guide, the Japanese mycologists who were our hosts at forays, banquets, and lecture sessions, and the American mycologists in our group, all contributed to a great trip.

We had a sampling of Japanese foods and customs: fresh cot-

ton kimonos, called yukata, every evening to wear to dinner baths or bed (even for a magnificent massage); tatami to sit on; futons to sleep in; impromptu songs from the girl guide each local bus carries, and from our hosts when enough beer and sake had flowed; hot springs and old-fashioned hot baths; typical sightseeing, etc.

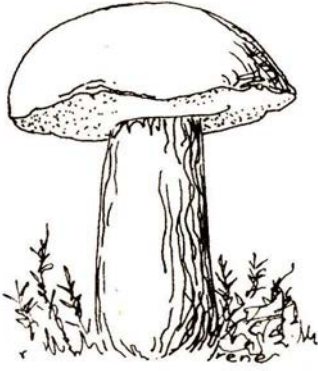
To me the people are the most interesting - ourselves and our hosts. I found myself explaining to our constant guide Shimamoto-san that we seemed to fall into several groups: 1. Professional mycologists, such as Rolf Singer, the senior scientist, now at the Field Museum in Chicago, a charming cosmopolitan person, and Gary Lincoff, President of NAMA, of the Bronx Botanical Garden, young and most enthusiastic. 2. Devoted amateurs: Andrew Weil, M.D., author of "Chocolate to Morphine, Understanding Mind-Active Drugs" and "Health and Healing; Understanding Conventional and Alternative Medicine; Emanuel Salzman, M.D., past president of the Colorado Mycological Society. 3. Pothunters like me and the Nisei gentleman who will decide (depending on where he finds more Matsutake) whether to spend his retirement in the Minneapolis area with access to Michigan, or move to Seattle. 4. Commercial growers: a couple of gung-ho young men from the West Coast; and 5. A spouse or two who came for the ride.

Wild mushrooms were limited because of a long dry spell. My finds are always limited when longer-legged, further-seeing, more scientific souls are in the party, which bothers me not at all. The trails, especially on the lower slopes of Fuji are wide, rough, dusty in dry weather, and look as if they are rivers when it rains. It was sad to look up to the mountain top (happily visible on a fine day) and down to candy wrappers and such. We are ahead of the Japanese it would seem, in concern over pollution and litter, but not in much else.

The commercial establishments where "wild" mushrooms are being tamed were interesting. Several species are grown in bottles, in sterilized media, under temperature and humidity control.

Matsutake however, refuse to come indoors. They are being intensively studied in their natural habitat, where the slopes are cared for to encourage Matsutake and discourage competing fungi. I gathered that overpicking is one cause of the scarcity; the other is that young farmers quit farming and go to the cities, so there are few left to worry about mushrooms when they have pressing economic concerns.

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# P. S. M. S. Spore Prints

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PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
2559 N.E. 96th, Seattle, Washington 98115  
Direct all mail to this address

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- ALTERNATES: Dennis Bowman; Alice Austin; Edith Godar  
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: Milton Grout  
SCIENTIFIC ADVISER: Dr. Joseph Ammirati

## Calendar

- Jan. 14 Monday, Beginners Orientation Class, 6:45 pm  
Membership Meeting, 8:00 pm
- Jan. 21 Monday, Board Meeting, 7:30 pm
- Jan. 25 Deadline for Spore Prints material. Send to  
Editor, 2559 NE 96th, Seattle, WA 98115
- Feb. 11 Monday, Beginners Orientation Class, 6:45  
Membership Meeting, 8:00 pm
- March 15th, Friday, The 21st Annual Survivors Banquet

### BEGINNERS CLASS CONTINUES IN JANUARY M.M.H.

The Beginners Orientation Classes held at 6:45 on the day of the regular membership meeting (which starts at 8:00 pm) continue through June. The topic of the January session will be a continuation of the workings of PSMS and what you can do in the winter to get ready for the spring mushroom season. The classes are open to all members. There is no fee.

### 1985 ELECTIONS

Ed Bush, chairman of the 1985 election committee, welcomes nominations of members. In 1985 the following positions come up: Vice President; Secretary; 5 Trustees, and 3 Alternates. You may nominate yourself or someone else, but you must have that someone else's permission.

## Membership Meeting

Monday, January 14, 1985, 8:00 pm in the auditorium of the MONROE CENTER, 1810 N.W. 65th Street, Seattle.

Program: A double-header is in store for us: Joy Spurr, a charter member, and the Society's photographer will present a slide illustrated lecture on the Tremellaceae (Jelly Fungi). Joy wrote a Key for these fungi for the Pacific Key Council.

Hildegard Hendrickson will show a few slides illustrating how the AT&T commercial "AT&T is in Mushrooms" was made in our state last June. The producers had asked the Society for technical advisers, and Monte, Hildegard, and Don Smetana could do it (on very short notice).

### BOARD NEWS

H.R.H.

Since no quorum was present at the December Board Meeting, no formal actions were taken, but several topics were discussed.

During the December membership meeting, three cars were broken into (two were parked in the parking lot, and one on the street). Ernie Boa volunteered to head a committee which will patrol the parking lot during membership meetings. President Dilly will ask the Monroe Center to get better lighting for the parking lot.

In order to facilitate car pooling for the field trips and/or meetings, a membership list arranged by zip codes will be produced. Members then can find out who lives close to them and can arrange for jointly attending PSMS functions.

With no quorum present, no replacements were selected for Monte and Hildegard Hendrickson who have resigned from the Board of Trustees.

### EXHIBIT NEWS

Dennis Bowman

Here is your chance to own one of the original watercolor paintings, especially painted for use in our recent Exhibit Poster. The beautiful colors of the Russula aeruginea are accented by the double mat and wood frame.

Raffle tickets are available at our monthly membership meetings at the exhibit table, or by calling Pacita Roberts, at 362-2713. Drawing for this art work will be at the Survivors Banquet in March. Raffle tickets are sold for \$1.00 each or 3 for \$2.00.

### BOOKS

Judi Boa

At the December membership meeting someone "borrowed" the book on dying with mushrooms. Please return the book, it was sent by the publisher for review, and is not owned by PSMS. Contact Judi immediately!

Orders for the following new books can be placed:

Wild and Exotic Mushroom Cultivation in North America, A Growers' and Gourmets' Guide to the New Edible Species, by Geraldine C. Kaye. (approx. \$5.- \$6.)

Mushroom Madness, a Mushroom Cookbook, published by the Mount Pisgah Arboretum in Eugene, Oregon, with a foreword by Freeman Rowe. Retail price is \$7.95.

Guide to Some Edible and Poisonous Fungi of New York by Dr. Alan Bessette, of Utica College of Syracuse University. Retail price is \$3.95.

Tickets for the Annual Survivors Banquet which will be held on Friday, March 15, 1985, at Quinn's at Shilshole Bay again will be for sale at the January Membership Meeting. You may also order tickets by mail, by sending a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to Edith Godar, 11704 - 103rd NE, Kirkland, WA 98033. The price is \$15 per person.

This year we will have a fully catered dinner at a beautiful restaurant, and everyone should have a good time, since no one will be doing the cooking, etc. as in the past two years. Tom Stockley, wine columnist of the Seattle Times and Associate Editor of Pacific Magazine, will be our Banquet speaker. Mr. Stockley attempts to find the right combination of food and wine. He will also make the selection of wines for our Banquet.

We need donations of frozen or dried mushrooms for the Banquet. The preferred varieties are morels, chanterelles, and boletes. Please contact me at the membership meetings or call me at 722-9011 if you can donate some mushrooms.

More next month.

#### PLEASE PICK UP ARTICLES LEFT BEHIND ON FIELD TRIPS

The following articles have been brought back from the field trips this past year. Please contact Alice or Gilbert Austin at the next membership meeting to claim your possessions.

1 grey blanket (Soda Springs); 1 wooden salad bowl (Crystal Springs); 1 bread and butter Knife (Millersylvania); 1 pair (men's) dark glasses (Crystal Springs); 1 plastic silverware box with lid containing silverware, plastic ware, can openers, etc. (Millersylvania); 1 mushroom basket (Crystal Springs); 1 huge barbecue fork (Exhibit?) 8 forks (Exhibit?) 1 white plastic spatula (Exhibit?); 3 serving spoons (Exhibit?)

#### WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Michael and Nancy Colley: 524-8520; Maribeth Coulter: 488-8666; Edith Hahto: 1-779-4786; Sharm Hendrickson and Walle Ralkowsky: 723-6317; LuciBelle O'Grady: 283-9907; Jeff Vinson: 322-4650.

Please change the new phone number for Dave and Jennie Schmitt to read 1-897-8002. In the previous notice two of the numbers were reversed.

#### WILDMUSHROOM STUDY TOUR OF JAPAN (cont'd from p. 1)

What the Japanese call an easy trail was not always easy for us. When we reached the steep area where the Matsutake grew, among the colored wire markers of where previous crops came up, I sat down and clung to a small tree so as not to slide down and ruin some choice specimens; precious for sure - \$40 for one in the market!

Shiitake are grown in several places we visited, under light shelters or on open hillsides. On a mountain, 20 minutes by bus above populous Kiryu City, which effectively vanishes as you round the last hairpin bend, is the International Mushroom Hall, part of the establishment of the Mori family. It is a small, elegant hotel with mushrooms everywhere, patterned on drapes, spreads, and yukata - in stone in the garden near the statue of the Dr. Mori, now gone, who developed the technique of incorporating Shiitake spores in plugs that are dried for sale. Holes are bored in oak logs and the plugs inserted.

Shiitake logs slant in neat diagonals on the steep slopes along the road. There are also a small museum and a research institute, where studies of the use of mushroom extracts to treat and prevent cancer are going on. Here, and also at the National Cancer Center in Tokyo, scientists have been working for some twenty years on mice, particularly a strain that gets, or can be given sarcomas. No studies on humans have yet been projected.

Before we left the Mori "Hall", we were each given a gift of dried Shiitake and, next evening in Tokyo, a nephew of the present head of the family, came with a beautiful porcelain soup bowl and cover for each (not this time a mushroom pattern). A tactful and elegant way to be sure we remember.

Everywhere, the hospitality and charm of our hosts was notable. Our group responded nicely. Gary Lincoff made little speeches in Japanese on suitable occasions.

At the banquet at Fuji Sakora-So (the Fuji Cherry Blossom Lodge) a group of Japanese mycologists gave us an impromptu (I think) concert. Gary called us up to reciprocate, and lead us in "Row, row, row your boat." Try that off-key.

A lady from New York State wrote a haiku after our first morning at the foot of Mount Fuji:

From my balcony  
I see mushrooms looking up  
Welcome to Japan

by Margaret Morris

P.S. Amelia has contributed to the PSMS library: two articles by Rokuya Imazeki: "Mushrooms and Japanese People" and "Japanese Mushroom Names" and a brief article on Buddha's Death by Mushroom Poisoning by M. Yamamoto.

#### FENNEL IN MUSHROOM SAUCE NJMA

4 fennel bulbs	1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 tbs oil	3 tbs butter
3 tbs whole wheat flour	1-1/2 cup low-fat milk
1 tsp salt	1 bay leaf
dash nutmeg	1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1/4 cup whole wheat bread crumbs	

Trim stems and tough outer layer of fennel bulbs. Remove feathery green leaves; if they seem fresh, chop them and set aside for sauce. Cut bulbs in half through the center and steam for ten minutes, until tender, but not all soft.

Saute mushrooms in oil over medium heat, adding a bit of oil to prevent sticking. When mushrooms are tender, add butter melt it, and stir in flour. Continue cooking over low heat, for a couple of minutes, stirring. **Add milk gradually, along with salt, bay leaf and nutmeg.** Bring sauce almost to the boiling point, and reduce heat again to low. Cook for 5 to 10 minutes more, stirring often. Add fennel leaves if they are fresh. Add two tablespoons parmesan cheese into sauce. Pour sauce over fennel bulbs, and combine remaining cheese with bread crumbs. Spread crumbs over fennel bulbs and bake in 350° oven for 20 minutes or so, until crumbs are golden brown.

#### MOREL CANAPES:

Saute 1/2 lb. chopped morels in a 1/4 lb. of butter. Place the sauteed morels into an electric blender with 1/2 cup of soft butter, 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 4 tablespoons of dry sherry or brandy. Blend until smooth. Spread on crackers or toast triangles.  
(Recipe from Mt. Mazama Mushroom Association.)

## POISONINGS BY EDIBLE MUSHROOMS Hildegard Hendrickson

In October 1984 we reported a mushroom "poisoning" incident here in Seattle. George Rafanelli was called to Harborview Hospital to identify a mushroom which an elderly Vietnamese man had eaten. The mushroom was identified as Pleurotus ostreatus - the oyster mushroom - a choice edible fungus which the man had eaten on previous occasions without ill effects.

From the bulletins of other mycological societies (Los Angeles, Oregon, Colorado) articles stated that most poisonings suffered by experienced mycophagists are caused by "edible" mushrooms. These mushrooms are edible much of the time and so get the reputation of being "edible", but every so often they cause poisoning. The Colorado Mycological Society annually held (in the fall season) a mushroom tasting membership meeting. In 1984, for the first time in the history of the tasting meeting, eight members experienced gastro-intestinal illness.

It is interesting that often several persons will eat the mushrooms, yet not all will experience ill effects. The victims suffer nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. Allergies and individual sensitivities to food are abundant in the population and these reactions extend to mushrooms. It seems unfortunate and unfair that a conscientious mushroomer who has properly identified the mushrooms, and found them recommended in the field guide, experiences intestinal upsets.

And when these people seek medical help and a mushroom expert is called in, and the consultant confirms that the species of mushrooms that had been eaten is a good, edible fungus, the victim often is told that it wasn't the mushroom at all that made him/her sick, but rather a virus or something else he/she ate.

From various sources I found that among the mushrooms involved were the following:

We recommend parboiling (and discarding the water) before further cooking of Verpa bohemica and most Gyromitra species found in the spring. Yet, some people still report of gastro-intestinal discomforts.

The grey (L. naucina) and small Lepiota species also seem to make some people sick. In Los Angeles some people also became nauseous eating the (choice) Lepiota rachodes. With this genus there are some strains that cause the problems. In the case of L. rachodes it seems to be the variety hortensis in which the stem has a rimmed bulb, and in L. naucina it is the variety with the gray cap, a yellow-staining stem, and/or a phenolic odor.

A group of mycophagists in the East used to include Tricholomopsis platyphylla in their repertoire until one particular batch of it poisoned them all (since then at least one other poisoning has been reported, but previously the mushroom had been considered safe.)

Collybia dryophila once poisoned a group of mycology students (they suffered digestive tract upset which in at least one case was severe) but never before or since has this mushroom caused any problems.

In September on four different occasions four different students had tasted Collybia acerata; all four reported severe gastro-intestinal upsets.

Also in Oregon, a 12 year old ate Russula nigricans; he suffered dizziness, disorientation, and gastrointestinal upsets, but the symptoms ceased after an emetic was administered.

Paxillus involutus (listed as non-edible or poisonous in most

guides) was eaten and produced some strange results six days after ingestion. It is not entirely established that the mushrooms were at fault in this instance.

Most of the "unreliable" edible mushrooms are saprophytic (they grow on dead organic matter, as opposed to mycorrhizal mushrooms which are connected with living trees). In some cases as with Laetiporus sulphureus (chicken of the woods) growing on eucalyptus wood in California, Pholiota squarrosa (eaten by Greg Wright) growing on Aspen wood, and Armillaria mellea (honey mushrooms) growing on hemlock wood, the substrate increases the risk of poisoning. Being a saprophytic mushroom which grows on different kinds of wood and has different varieties or strains, Pleurotus ostreatus is a prime candidate for causing problems in some cases. And sure enough, the bluish-capped Pleurotus columbinus, which has been found to interbreed with P. ostreatus and is therefore considered to be a variety of it, has caused "diarrhea and other intestinal trouble" in Europe (The Complete Book of Mushrooms by Rinaldi & Tyndalo, p.125). The worst that has been said of P. ostreatus in North America is that "some variants in irrigated areas of our western states are reported to be unpalatable" (A Field Guide to Western Mushrooms by A. Smith, p. 124). The oyster mushrooms eaten by the Vietnamese man had come from California.

I agree with Greg Wright who says: "It is embarrassing to admit you ate a poisonous mushroom and got sick, but it takes gall to claim you ate an edible mushroom and got sick! It is easier to question your identification or the source of your illness. But if people who are being poisoned by "edible" mushrooms don't speak out, others of us will continue to be poisoned by these same mushrooms."

I have had personal reports from PSMS members about reactions after eating Leccinum aurentiacum. One member and Dr. Helen Smith reported allergic reactions after eating B. edulis, certainly considered a safe and choice edible fungus. A report from the University Hospital in Seattle told of a woman being treated for allergic reactions to Agaricus bisporus (the common store-bought mushrooms). Also in the Pacific Northwest, people reported that the chanterelles collected in certain areas had a "metallic" taste. But I have not heard of allergic reactions from this discovery.

This article is not meant to frighten anyone, just to share the experiences of eating wild mushrooms. As you can see, these generally considered choice, edible mushrooms did not kill anyone, they just made some people sick. And even then, it had not always been determined beyond any doubt that it was the fungi that caused the gastrointestinal discomfort.

PSMS would like to hear from our members when such incidents occur because it gives us more insight into the world of wild mushrooms.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Margaret Dilly

Due to the inclusion of the notice about Milton Grout's death which occurred after press time, only the highlights of the President's Message are included.

A Happy New Year to everyone. I hope all of you have decided to get more involved in PSMS activities in the coming year. Call the chairperson of a standing committee (listed in the Membership Roster) and volunteer. Also let the Society know what activities you like and which you don't like. A suggestion box is provided at the meetings and always in the library. Ed Bush, our librarian, has indexed all book and is doing more. More on this next month.